



## Abstracts from the 22nd International Social Pharmacy Workshop (2024) in Banff, Canada

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### Abstract 124

**Empowering healthcare professional students to address an emergent issue: Naloxone access**

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**Background:** Naloxone, a safe and effective medication to reverse an opioid overdose, recently became over-the-counter in the United States (US), but it remains vastly underutilized. Healthcare professionals are in an optimal position to educate patients and consumers about this newly available medication and promote its use through evidence-based harm reduction practices. Research on the challenges and facilitators for disseminating this life-saving medication remains limited. The objective of this study was to characterize healthcare professional students views about the stigma associated with medications used for substance use disorders and their role in harm reduction.

**Methods:** A qualitative approach was used for this study. Healthcare professional students were recruited from six colleges at a health science center in the mid-South of the United States of America. Thematic analysis using the six steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) was performed by two researchers facilitated by Dedoose®, a qualitative software. Rigor was achieved using Lincoln and Guba (1985) criteria.

**Results:** Five focus groups were conducted between March and June 2021, with 31 participants (mean age 27). Most students were White (n=19), and the majority were female (n=21). Fourteen students were from the College of Medicine, and 17 were from the College of Pharmacy. Thematic Analysis revealed the theme: "Empowering healthcare professional students to promote naloxone access." This theme reveals student concerns about their lack of preparation and confidence to promote the use of medication interventions for substance misuse due to lack of training and stigma.

**Conclusions:** Preparing the next generation of healthcare professionals to utilize available treatment options to advance harm reduction and patient care requires adaptation of interdisciplinary healthcare training program curriculum. The study findings highlight the need to develop educational strategies directly aimed toward reducing stigma toward substance misuse in order to promote access, proper usage, and broad distribution of naloxone.

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### Abstract 144

**Setting up a multidisciplinary framework on rational medicines use in the public health facilities in Sierra Leone, by leveraging the drug and therapeutic committee (DTC): a descriptive mix method study.**

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**Background:** The lack of a structured, multidisciplinary framework for rational medicine use is a major challenge in resource-limited settings, leading to the upscaling of the antimicrobial resistance crisis. The scarcity of resources, shortage of trained healthcare professionals, and lack of on-the-job training opportunities contribute to this challenge. To address this issue, a training program was conducted to support hospitals in setting up and managing DTCs locally. This study explores the DTC history, issues of rational medicine use, antimicrobial resistance, and stewardship, and provides a guide to future DTC setup mechanisms in Sierra Leone.

**Methods:** A descriptive mix design was utilized in this study. We reviewed training materials and meeting minutes and interviewed stakeholders for this report. The training was carried out in Bo, Kenema, Makeni, and Port Loko government hospitals. The transcripts from the recorded interviews and meeting minutes were read by two researchers, who, following a deductive method, presented the findings in themes.

**Results:** Overall, 63 health professionals took part in the training. The topics include rational medicine use, antimicrobial resistance, setting up antimicrobial stewardship, and ADR. Practicals that simulated typical issues of irrational medicine use were done and allowed participants to provide solutions. The findings show DTC started in Sierra Leone in 2008, yet it has not been sustainable over time to deliver on its objectives due to limited resource allocations, among others. Committees are active during funding seasons only. Even so, participants show commitment to supporting DTC but are challenged by a lack of accountability and standards, periodic medicine shortages, and labs that are not always functional to support evidence-based prescribing.

**Conclusions:** Healthcare providers developed competencies in DTC formation and management, despite historical accounts of inactive committees. All stakeholders remain committed to the DTC mandate, even when challenged with enforcing policy and standards due to shortages of essential medicines and inadequately functioning labs to support prescribing decisions.

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### Abstract 180

**Perceptions of professional behavior in a midwestern college of pharmacy community**

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**Background:** Professionalism may be different over time, as it is somewhat dependent on cultural norms. The purpose was to describe the perceptions of professionalism among individuals from all communities in a college of pharmacy in the midwestern United States. A secondary objective was for students in a research course to develop and analyze a survey.

**Methods:** We developed a 36-item survey including 8 scenarios based upon professionalism concepts such as integrity and dependability. The census of the college was sent an online survey, and potential respondents included students (BS, PharmD, MS, PhD), staff, and faculty. The survey contained demographic questions and 3 questions for 8 scenarios. Three scenarios also included open-ended questions. The extent to which the behavior in the scenario was unprofessional to professional (5-point scale), frequency of observing/doing the behavior (none to always), and confidence to perform behavior or learn from situation (not confident to fully confident) were assessed. Descriptive statistics were calculated, and the scenarios will be analyzed by type of respondent.

**Results:** To date, 137 of 794 have responded. Respondents were on average 34.7 (standard deviation 12.6) years of age, 72.4% female, and BS/PharmD students were 30.7%, graduate students were 20.4%, staff were 27.7% and faculty were 21.2% of respondents. The scenario of Failing to cite use of ChatGPT showed the lowest average unprofessional rating (1.53, std 1.0) and scenario of Getting to know colleagues from another culture (4.74, std 0.65) showed the highest average professional rating. A statistically significant difference by type of respondent was shown for Failing to cite ChatGPT ( $p=0.049$ ), with faculty finding this most unprofessional and students finding it less unprofessional.

**Conclusions:** Professionalism in a midwestern pharmacy school was determined across 8 scenarios. Additional analyses will explore differences across all scenarios by type of respondent and mixed methods integration will be done for three scenarios.

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#### Abstract 114

##### Differences in vaccination hesitancy between the native and ethnic minority populations: A questionnaire survey in Denmark

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**Background:** In Denmark, COVID-19 vaccination coverage was lower in areas with many residents from ethnic minority backgrounds. This study aimed to investigate vaccination hesitancy among the native and Arabic minority populations in Denmark.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional questionnaire survey was conducted, utilizing validated versions of the Danish and Arabic translations of the Vaccination Attitudes Examination (VAX) scale, which in this study referred separately to COVID-19 and all other vaccines. The VAX scale includes four subscales addressing: 1) mistrust of vaccine benefits, 2) concerns about unforeseen future effects, 3) worries about commercial profiteering, and 4) preference for natural immunity. Participants express their level of agreement using a 6-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate more hesitancy. Data were collected in January 2023 through selected Facebook groups using an online survey system. Descriptive and multivariate linear regression analyses (the latter with attitude scores as outcome variables and ethnicity alongside sociodemographic variables as covariates) were performed.

**Results:** Out of a total of 124 respondents, 35% were of Danish, 51% of Arabic and 14% of other ethnic heritage; 56% were females, 83% were fully vaccinated. Danish respondents were younger than Arabic (mean age, respectively, 35 vs. 48 years,  $p<0.001$ ). Hesitancy toward both COVID-19 and all other vaccines was higher among Arabic respondents compared to Danish. The mean overall score for COVID-19 VAX was, respectively, 2.1 vs. 3.4 (adjusted  $p<0.001$ ); the mean overall score for all other vaccines' VAX was, respectively, 2.0 vs. 3.1 (adjusted  $p<0.001$ ). In all groups, the highest scores concerned unforeseen future events, the lowest scores were related to concerns about commercial profiteering.

**Conclusions:** There is greater hesitancy towards vaccination among the Arabic

minority compared to the native population in Denmark, which may partly explain variations in COVID-19 vaccination coverage. More efforts are needed to understand and address negative vaccination attitudes among ethnic minorities in Denmark.

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#### Abstract 104

##### MedSMART Adventures in PharmaCity Game: Youth Experiences and Recommendation for Use in Opioid Safety Education

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**Background:** Adolescents are often excluded from the creation of opioid safety interventions; therefore, it is crucial to design evidence-based interventions tailored for and with youth. Video games are ubiquitous and approachable to adolescents making them an accessible educational modality. MedSMART: Adventures in PharmaCity is a serious game that educates adolescents and their families on the safe, appropriate, and responsible use of opioid prescriptions.

**Methods:** The first objective of the study was to elucidate adolescents' experiences and perceptions of the game. The second objective was to elicit their recommendations for use and suggestions for improvement. Adolescents were recruited through Qualtrics research panels, social media, listservs, and snowball sampling. Recruitment occurred between April 2021 and October 2021. Eligible adolescents played the game and completed a follow-up virtual semi-structured interview with a study team member. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and uploaded to NVivo for data analysis. A thematic content analysis was performed. A total of seventy-two adolescents participated.

**Results:** Analysis yielded four themes: prior gaming experience, educational salience, game design impressions, and recommendations for improvement. Most adolescents approached MedSMART with prior gaming experience. The youth correctly identified the game's intended objective: the promotion of opioid medication safety. Adolescents had overwhelmingly positive impressions of the game's levels, characters, and graphics. Study participants suggested expanded game levels, improved controls, and more instructions for gameplay.

**Conclusions:** The overall findings from the study demonstrate that an overwhelming number of adolescent participants favored using MedSMART as an educational tool to prepare adolescents for real-world scenarios involving opioids and other medications. Opioid hospitalizations and mortality may be prevented by tailoring drug safety education to a platform which adolescents will enjoy. The youth reported the MedSMART serious game as being acceptable, useful, enjoyable, and educational.

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#### Abstract 111

##### Consumer Likelihood to Seek Information: OTC Medicines

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**Background:** There is continuing uncertainty in whether the public use OTC medicines with the due diligence they require. Given the fact they are accessible without a prescription, there are some who feel these medicines are very low, or even without, risk. Objective. The objective was to quantify the likelihood people would seek information on OTC medicines, in relation to 10 non-drug products. This was done as a proxy measure for the importance consumers place on them. **Methods:** Citizens of one Canadian province estimated the likelihood (scale of 1 to 10) they would search for information when considering a purchase. The survey had two lists – a MIXED products list (five OTC medicine categories and 10 non-drug products) and an OTC MEDICINES list (15 categories).

**Results:** Five hundred and seventy-five surveys were obtained (response rate 19.2 percent). The average age was 63.0 years, 61.6 percent were female, while the education level of respondents was particularly high. The mean search likelihood for the 15 products on the MIXED list ranged from 2.2 to 7.4. There